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UNCLAS HANOI 001971

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SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL ISSUES AT AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH MFA
ASSISTANT FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: A) Hanoi 1941 (NOTAL)

1. (SBU) The Ambassador met Assistant Foreign Minister Nguyen Duc Hung July 28 for a one-on-one discussion at Hung's request. Most of the conversation was taken up by discussion of issues related to Vietnam's WTO entry (reftel), but several other issues also came up.

2. (SBU) The Ambassador noted the intention to send a joint Embassy-ConGen Ho Chi Minh City team to the Central Highlands to meet with ethnic minority migrants who were returned to Vietnam from Cambodia July 20. Ambassador Hung said the MFA will support and assist with that effort. The Ambassador raised the ongoing issue of Dak Lak Province's foot-dragging on issuance of necessary travel documents to the follow-to-join family members of Vietnamese refugees in the United States, and noted that Dak Lak's recalcitrance on this issue could have ramifications for the USG's ability to secure a waiver of Jackson-Vanik amendment provisions for Vietnam. AFM Hung had no new information or official response.

3. (SBU) The Ambassador raised the issue of the Human Rights Dialogue. He said the USG looks forward to holding the Dialogue at an appropriate time in the Fall of 2005. AFM Hung noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs looked forward to making the Dialogue as constructive as possible. Also on the subject of Human Rights, the Ambassador highlighted USG concerns regarding the health problems of prisoner of concern Pham Hong Son and recommended that the GVN release Son as part of the September National Day amnesty for humanitarian reasons. AFM Hung said that he would look into the matter.

4. (SBU) The Ambassador advised AFM Hung of his intent to meet with released political dissident Dr. Nguyen Dan Que in Ho Chi Minh City, noting that Que is considering travel to the United States. AFM Hung replied that Que is a "sensitive and high-profile case" and stated that he believed that Que is subject to "administrative restrictions" for a period of time, perhaps three years. It is not clear, AFM Hung said, if Que will be permitted to travel under the terms of his release. At the end of the meeting, Hung urged the Ambassador not to meet with Que, suggesting that a staff member do so. The Ambassador was noncommittal. (Note: the meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 3. End Note.)

MARINE